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ABSTRACT

This document presents North Dakota guidelines to help transitions of young children with disabilities. It identifies two critical service delivery transitions for these children: first, when the child enters early childhood special education services (ECSE) and second, when the child exits those services. Following an introduction, there is a discussion of the role of transition when the child first enters the program including development of the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP). The following section focuses on the second transition, when the child exits the ECSE program, with sub-sections on the role of transition agreements and the role of curriculum. Appendices comprise the major portion of the document and include: a chart showing the transition process from infant development programs, a summary of notice/consent needs during the transition process, a comparison of federal requirements for the IFSP and the IEP (Individualized Education Program), the recommended 3-5 transition process from ECSE programs to school-age programs, a list of potential differences between ECSE and kindergarten programs, a list of social/survival skills critical for successful transitions, a kindergarten classroom checklist, and a preschool/kindergarten teacher questionnaire. (DB)

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Early Childhood Special Education for Children with Disabilities, Ages Three through Five: Transition

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EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, AGES THREE THROUGH FIVE: TRANSITION

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of the transition process is to ensure continuity in the delivery of comprehensive services that meet the needs of a young child with disabilities as he/she grows and develops. Transition serves as a vital component in providing comprehensive services for young children with disabilities. An effective transition includes (1) collaboration among educators and other service providers and family members throughout the transition process; (2) enlisting family members as equal partners; and (3) maximizing children's adjustment during movement from one setting to another. For transitions to be successful, the process must offer support for a child through appropriate assessment and curricular planning; support for the family through adequate preparation and their active involvement; and support for educators and other service providers through appropriate planning and ongoing communication promoted by administration. The transition process must include planned procedures that account for the cultural, family, and social influences that impact each situation.

The transition process can be an exciting and rewarding experience for all involved. It is a period of change, moving from the familiar toward the unknown. It signifies growth and development of the child and new opportunities for the enhancement of skills. Yet this process also presents challenges that may create feelings of trepidation for the child, family, educators and other service providers. Challenges for the child may include adjusting to a new physical, social, and learning environment where expectations, teacher attention, and individualization may be different. These changes require a transfer of skills, which may create a sense of insecurity and stress for the child. Challenges for the family may stem from apprehensions regarding appropriateness of the new services, acceptance of their child in the new setting, the changing nature of their role, and preparedness of the educators and other service providers working with their child. A primary challenge of professionals from both the sending and receiving programs is maintaining accurate and ongoing communication. Educators and other service providers must be informed of eligibility requirements, program emphasis, service options, and child and family needs (Bricker, Odem, & Peck, 1993).

As with many other changes, transition to a new program creates challenges as well as new opportunities for growth. Conquering the challenges can give a child and family additional confidence to meet future transitions. Too much change, however, may create stress, anxiety, fear or confusion, and it may hinder a young child's ability to learn.

The goal in a smooth transition is to create as much continuity as possible for a child who is entering a new program in the community or school. Research has shown that:

- Whenever young children can experience success during significant transitions they grow in confidence and competence to manage later moves.

- Local planning by responsible teachers, families, and representatives from other community agencies can minimize discontinuity and enhance children's opportunities for success.

- Developmentally appropriate curricula provide continuity and promote early success for children with a diversity of abilities and previous experiences.

- Family members often contribute significantly to young children's adjustments to a new environment. To be comfortable participants, parents need information and encouragement. Their culture and goals families have for their children must be valued.

- Families who feel welcome are likely to continue active involvement in their children's education.

- Planned activities can help children and families cope with necessary changes and negotiate transitions successfully.

- Written procedures and timelines help ensure that transition activities occur on schedule.

Transition planning ensures that the special needs of a child and the family are met, necessary information about the child's special learning characteristics is shared, and special equipment and training are provided in a timely manner. Good beginnings help to minimize or avert later problems. When teachers, families and representatives of community agencies plan together, the transition process yields more satisfactory results. Planning can help a child and family reduce anxiety about transition and, instead, anticipate the exciting opportunities of the school years. (*Taking the Next Steps Together*, Iowa Dept. of Education, June 1996)

Two critical service delivery transitions occur for the preschool aged child with disabilities. Parents and professionals must negotiate both transitions on behalf of the child. The **first transition** occurs when the child enters early childhood special education services, and the **second transition** occurs when the child exits those services.

THE ROLE OF TRANSITION

When A Child Enters Early Childhood Special Education Services

Transition occurs at any time a child enters an early childhood special education service. The child may be moving from an early intervention program, home, or other early childhood program. The transition occurring in any one of these situations needs to be well planned, coordinated and implemented. Educators and other service providers should know the resources available to the family, begin the transition process early, and support the family throughout the transition process (Hanson & Lynch, 1995).

Federal requirements for both the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) and the Individualized Education Program (IEP) are given in Appendix C. Both the IFSP and the IEP are written documents that outline the service to be provided by Early Childhood Special Education programs. Outcome statements and goals must directly reflect the concerns and priorities identified by IFSP/IEP team members including the child's parents.

In North Dakota the agency providing services to children with disabilities from birth through age 2, is the Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities. The IFSP used by service providers within this agency was developed according to Federal requirements (P.L. 105-17, Part C) along with input from Department of Public Instruction personnel regarding the requirements of P.L. 105-17, Part B. The IFSP used in North Dakota does incorporate all required components of the IEP.

When a child transitions from an early intervention program, transition planning is mandated. Part C of Public Law 105-17 specifically identifies procedures required for transition. Two key timelines are identified in Part C regulations:

- the transition process must begin at least six months prior to a child's third birthday; and
- a transition plan must be developed at least three months prior to a child's third birthday.

Further, each child's Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) must address procedures to be implemented that initiate the transition and describe how families will be supported throughout this process. Procedural safeguards of parent prior written notice and parent consent must also be addressed throughout this process.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, Office of Special Education, and the Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities, jointly developed a transition process. It assures that appropriate transitions occur for children exiting Infant Development services and entering Early Childhood Special Education services. See Appendix A, *Transition Process from Infant Development to Special Education Unit Services*, for a summary of this transition process.

The transition process is initiated on the child's second birthday and ends after the child's third birthday when the transition plan has been successfully implemented. Each required activity that is identified specifies a timeline for completion of that activity, identifies who is responsible for implementation of the activity, the function of the activity, and who is involved in the activity.

Procedural safeguards concerning the rights of parents must be addressed for two activities during these transition processes.

- The parent must receive written prior notice of a proposed joint meeting involving parents and professionals, from both the sending and receiving programs. This proposed joint meeting may include reviewing existing data, considering parent's information, and planning needed assessments of the child.

- Parents must give written consent if additional information must be obtained through formal assessments in order to determine program eligibility or identify specific service delivery needs. The agency identified as having primary responsibility for carrying out the evaluation process must obtain written consent.

If a child is determined eligible for preschool special education services, a joint IFSP/IEP meeting is scheduled. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, reauthorized in 1997, states that a two-year-old child with a disability who will turn age three during the school year may continue to be served through the IFSP, if such a plan is determined appropriate by the IFSP/IEP team. Parents must receive written prior notice of the joint IFSP/IEP meeting and also sign consent for initial placement into special education services. See Appendix B, *Transition Process: Notice/Consent Summary* for a summary of parent notice/consent requirements.

Concern with continuity in the education and care of the young child is also seen in the new requirements of IDEA 97. The local "school district" must be part of the team that plans a young child's transition from early intervention to preschool services.

"By the third birthday of such a child, an individualized education program, or if consistent with sections 614(d)(2)(B) and 636(d), an individual family service plan, has been developed and is being implemented for the child. The local educational agency will participate in transition planning conferences arranged by the designated lead agency under section 637(a)(8)." [Section 612(a)(9)]

THE USE OF THE IFSP

Beyond A Child's Third Birthday

An IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan) is the written documentation required in IDEA for the early intervention services to be provided for children from birth up to age three and their families. For children three years and older, an IEP (Individualized Education Program) provides the written documentation for the child's educational program. As mentioned previously, IDEA 97 states that a two-year-old child with a disability who will turn age three during the school year may continue to be served through the IFSP if determined appropriate.

It is critical to note that because of the importance of the IEP as the statutory vehicle for ensuring FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education) to a child with a disability, the parents' agreement to use an IFSP for the child instead of an IEP requires written informed consent by the parents that is based on an explanation of the differences between an IFSP and IEP (C.F.R. 300.342 – Note 3).

Although both IFSPs and IEPs outline the intervention plan for young children with disabilities, differences exist regarding the requirements of these plans. The four primary differences between the plans are:

1. The IFSP places focus on the family while an IEP is more child focused.

2. The IFSP requires outcome statements that describe the anticipated changes in the child and family while the IEP uses goals and objectives to describe the child's intended progress.

3. Part C of IDEA (ages birth to 3) recognizes the need to assist families in the transition process and to ensure continuity of services by requiring that a transition plan be developed for the IFSP as the child and family move from one service to another.

4. The IFSP requires that a service coordinator be identified to be responsible for implementation of the plan and coordination with other agencies and persons providing services to the child and family.

Federal requirements for both the IFSP and the IEP are given in Appendix C.

THE ROLE OF TRANSITION

When A Child Exits Early Childhood Special Education Services

The transition from an early childhood special education program into school aged programs may be less difficult for both professionals and the family. Although the service delivery methods may change, the overall service delivery system remains the same and is provided by the school. However, to facilitate a smooth transition from early childhood special education services, planning must begin early and all appropriate persons must be included.

As with all transitions, success occurs when communication among all key persons is accurate and ongoing. Such communication will help alleviate parent concerns for their child regarding how the child is developing, how he/she will be accepted in the new setting, how the child's unique needs will be met by the new program, and how the child will adjust to a new learning environment. Communication among educators and other service providers and parents will assure that specific child needs and expectations are identified and addressed, potential problems avoided, and trust is developed between all involved.

A child's IEP team may expand to include additional personnel appropriate to the transition planning process. The IEP team then becomes the primary source for any consideration of transition arrangements. The IEP team may outline plans for parent visitations to the receiving program, observations of the child by the receiving teacher, observation of the receiving program by the sending teacher, or trial visits by the child to the new program. Further, the IEP team should review and revise the goals and objectives of the child's current IEP to reflect skills identified as necessary to ensure success in the new setting.

The transition process is initiated during the fall of the child's last year in early childhood special education services and ends after the child enters the new setting. Each required activity specifies a timeline for completion of that activity, and identifies who is responsible for implementation of the activity, the function of the activity, and who is involved in the activity. See Appendix D, *Recommended 3 – 5 Transition Process*, for a summary of this transition process.

Procedural safeguards concerning the rights of parents must be addressed for one activity during this transition process. When a child will be receiving services separate from his/her home school, a major change is reflected in the child's programming. Therefore, an IEP meeting between parents and professionals from both the sending and receiving programs must be held and parental consent must be given for the program change.

THE ROLE OF TRANSITION AGREEMENTS

Transition agreements facilitate interagency collaboration by creating a formal process for sharing critical information about a child's transition from one program to another. Agreements ensure that:

- the information exchange occurs in a timely manner,
- all available resources are identified,
- specific transition activities are identified,
- the functions of the transition activities are clarified; and,
- roles and responsibilities are assigned.

Annual review of the agreement is a critical component of the overall transition process. Annual review will assure consistency in practice and enhance satisfaction of all participating members. A clearly written agreement will increase understanding between program staff and the family, reduce duplication of services, and allow the child to successfully move from one program to another (Chandler, 1990).

THE ROLE OF CURRICULUM

Adaptations in curriculum made to facilitate a child's transition have traditionally focused on preparing children to enter large group, kindergarten or school age programs that have been academic in nature. Although the purpose of these adaptations may have been to ease the transition to a new setting for the children, they often created curricular adaptations that were developmentally inappropriate for the child. The end result has been a "misguided attempt to ease the child's transition" (Bredecamp, 1987). In order for curricular adaptations, to be developmentally appropriate, they must be made on a child-by-child basis, taking into account the child's present level of functioning, ability, family and cultural background.

Each child's IFSP/IEP team must consider differences in service delivery models as part of the transition process. Examples of potential differences of program components for Early Childhood Special Education programs and kindergarten programs are included in Appendix E. Transition enables children to succeed in the new program, rather than preparing the student to be academically ready for the new program. Examples of behaviors appropriate to this focus are included in Appendix F, *Social/Survival Skills Critical for Successful Transitions*.

In the past, transition efforts focused on preparing children and families for the differences that would be encountered between programs. More recently there has been a growing recognition that the key to successful transition is to ensure continuity of services both in and out of the classroom. Continuity in the following three key areas of Early Childhood Special Education programs can facilitate continuity of programs:

- developmentally appropriate practice;
- parent involvement; and
- supportive services for children and families. (Lombardi, 1992)

SUMMARY

Transition assists children and their families as they move into new relationships with service providers or systems. Many parents have questions about what will be expected of their child in the new setting. In addition to the normal adjustments of beginning a new program, many children have special needs to be met during transition periods.

Transition assists teachers, support staff and care providers supporting children and their families during the move between services. Planning helps adults to share questions and information with each other to ease each child's transition. Cooperative transition planning among responsible teachers, support staff and care providers also helps them build services that create continuity for children and their families. Tools for planning a smooth process may be helpful. A Transition Checklist for school age personnel and several teacher interview forms are included in Appendix G.

Transition assists administrators of educational services and community service agencies who are responsible for initiating the community's plan for transition. Administrators can develop policies and practices to improve transitions. When they work together, agency administrators can provide information and services families need to support their children. Joint efforts can reduce miscommunication.

Cooperative transition planning among teachers, administrators, care providers, parents and support staff can help build programs that create continuity for young children with disabilities and their families.

APPENDIX T-A - Transition Process From Infant Develop[illegible]Birth-Two Programs) to Special Education Unit Services

ID=Infant Development DD=Developmental Disabilities

	ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	JOINT RESPONSIBILITY	FUNCTION	INVITATION TO ATTEND
1	Meeting between Infant Development Program and Developmental Disabilities Program Administrators and Case Management	ID/DD meetings prior to fall administrators meeting	*ID Program Coordinator DD Program Administrator/ Case Management	Review caseload of infants enrolled in ID Program • identify children transferring to public schools within the following year • review children currently in the transition process • review all children in ID services	ID Program Coordinator ID Staff DD Program Administrator or Designee DD Case Managers
2	Parents Informed	One year prior to transition (child's second birthday)	*ID Program Coordinator DD Case Management	Parent signs Release of Information so ID Program can begin sharing information with receiving Special Education Unit	ID Staff Parents/Guardian
3	Administrative Meeting/Contact between ID Coordinator/Special Education Administrator/ DD Program Administrator/ DD Case Management	In the fall, prior to (Dec. 1) Child Count	*ID Program Coordinator Special Education Admin. DD Program Admin.	Review record/status of transfer children Coordinate/confirm activities, timelines and agency responsibilities for each child to transition Share summary data on other children enrolled in Infant Development Program Review information children receiving DD case management services only	ID Program Coordinator Special Education Unit Admin. DD Program Administrator/ Case Management General Education
4	Receiving School District Notified in Writing of Child to be Transitioning within the Upcoming Year	Within 1 month following child's second birthday	*ID Program Coordinator DD Case Management	The following information is sent: Written Release of Information; evaluation; diagnostic and program information.	
5	Joint Multi-Agency Assessment Planning Meeting	By the time the child is 2 years 6 months of age	*ID Program Coordinator Special Education Unit DD Case Management	Give and explain Part B/C Procedural Safeguards Address DD case management redetermination of eligibility at age 3 Discuss eligibility under Part B (Special Education 619; IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Discuss of continuum of services/use of IEP Arrange appropriate visitation of child and parent to service options Discuss and plan for additional evaluation or information, if needed Obtain sign evaluation consent (special education unit is responsible) Discuss and schedule IFSP/IEP team meeting	Parents/Guardian ID Staff DD Case Manager Special Education Unit Staff General Education
6	Joint Multi-Agency Assessment	Prior to IFSP/IEP Meeting	*ID Program Coordinator Special Education Unit DD Case Manager	Conduct assessment Refers Child to Human Services Eligibility Determination Team (DD Case Management to responsible)	ID Staff Special Education Unit Staff Parents/Guardian
7	IFSP/IEP Team Meeting	Prior to child turning 2 years 9 months of age	*ID Program Coordinator Special Education Unit DD Case Management General Education	Determine eligibility under Part B IDEA procedural safeguards Identification of continued use of IFSP or write IEP Update IFSP (review current IFSP) or write IEP to include documentation of transition Determine placement Obtain signed consent for placement in Special Education Services	Parents/Guardian Child ID Program Coord./Staff DD Case Manager Special Education Unit Staff Regular Education

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8. Transfer to Special Education Unit (Local Education Agency - LEA)	Child's third birthday	*ID Program Coordinator Special Education Unit DD Case Management	Child participates in Special Education program	Child/Parent
9. Follow-up as Designated in Transition Plan	Initial follow-up within 3 months of ID discontinued service	*ID Program Coordinator DD Case Management	Options: • Telephone contact to parent • Observation • Visitation to preschool program • Telephone contact to preschool program teacher/coordinator	ID Program Staff Special Education Staff DD Case Manager Parents/Guardian Child

*Because the Infant Development Program is the "Primary" Provider, it will have the primary responsibility to be the initiator of all process steps. However, all agencies have a joint responsibility within the transition process.

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APPENDIX T-B

TRANSITION PROCESS: NOTICE/CONSENT SUMMARY

ACTIVITY	PRIOR NOTICE	PARENT PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS	PARENT CONSENT
1. Meeting between Infant Development Program and Developmental Disabilities Program Administration and Case Management	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
2. Administrative Meeting between Infant Development Coordinator/Special Education Administrators/DD Program Administrator/DD Case Management	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
3. Receiving School District Notified of Child to be Transitioning within the Upcoming Year	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
4. Joint Multi-Agency Assessment Planning Meeting	Required	Required	Evaluation Consent Required
5. IEP/IFSP Meeting	Required	Required	Parent Initial Placement Consent Required
6. Transfer to Special Education Unit (School District)	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
7. Follow-up as Designated in Transition Plan	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required

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Comparison of Federal Requirements IFSP/IEP

IFSP	IEP
• A statement of the child's present levels of development: physical (including vision, hearing, and health status), cognitive, communicative (language and speech), psychosocial, and adaptive behavior • A statement of family strengths, resources, concerns, and priorities in relationship to the child's development • A statement of the major outcomes expected to be achieved for the child and family • A statement of the early intervention services that are necessary to meet the identified outcomes for the child and family; including the frequency, intensity, and method of delivering services • A statement of the natural environments in which the services will be appropriately provided or a statement explaining why services will not be provided in a natural environment • Projected dates for the initiation of services and the anticipated duration of these services • Identification of a service coordinator who will be responsible for the implementation of the IFSP and the coordination with other agencies and professionals • Development of a transition plan prior to 3 months before the child reaches age three • Written consent from the parents or legal guardians (must be obtained prior to provision of services) [P.L. 105-17, Sect. 635.(d)]	• A statement of the child's present levels of educational performance based on information gathered from a variety of sources such as tests, observations, work samples, etc. For preschool children, as appropriate, describe how the disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities • A statement of annual goals and related short-term objectives that delineate what the child is expected to learn over a specific time period. Most IEP goals are annual goals that cover the entire school year. Objectives are for shorter amounts of time and a system should be in place to update them on a regular basis. Objectives must be stated in measurable terms and: (1) Specify what behavior(s) the child is to perform (2) Describe the conditions under which the child is to perform the desired behavior(s) (3) State the degree to which the child is expected to perform the desired behavior(s) • A statement of the special education and related services to be provided to help the child obtain the stated goals and objectives • The extent of time to which the child will participate with nondisabled children in the general education setting, including participation in district-wide and statewide assessments • The projected dates the special education program and other services will begin and the anticipated duration that the services will be provided • The criteria that will be used to determine if the goals and objectives have been met • The date for evaluating the child's performance and the effectiveness of the program in meeting the child's short-term instructional objectives (each child's program must be reviewed at least once a year, or at least as often as progress is reported for nondisabled children) [P.L. 105-17, Sect. 614.(d)(1)(A)]

RECOMMENDED 3-5 TRANSITION PROCESS
From ECSE Programs to School-Age Programs

Activity	Timeline	Responsibility	Function	Invitation to Attend
1. Determine liaisons for preschool and school-age programs	Fall of Year	Case Manager/Preschool Administrator, Administrator of School of Residence	Coordinate planning for transitioning children	N/A
2. Meeting between preschool and school-age liaisons	Fall of Year	Preschool Liaison	Numbers of children and descriptions of disabilities	Preschool Coordinator, School-Age Liaison, and School Personnel from School of Residence
3. IEP team meeting	Annual review date or at least 6 months prior to transition	Case Manager, Resident School Administrator	Develop transition plan as part of IEP*: update goals and objectives; identify assessment needs; determine transition activities, potential placements, transportation needs, relevant family needs	Parents, IEP Team, Transition Liaison
4. Visitations to school-age and preschool programs	Prior to 3 months before transition	Preschool Liaison, School-Age Personnel, Resident Administrator of School of Residence	Observe potential receiving school settings. Observe students in current setting	Parents & Child, Preschool Liaison, IEP Team, Appropriate School-Age Personnel
5. Assessment needed for planning school programming	Prior to 3 months before transition	Preschool & School-Age Personnel, Administrator of School of Residence	Complete necessary assessment for programming information	N/A
6. Final transition meeting	Within 3 months before the end of school year	Preschool Liaison, Administrator of School of Residence	Finalize school placement for forthcoming year. Transfer of appropriate records	Parents, Preschool Liaison, IEP Team, Appropriate School-Age Personnel
7. Follow-up as designed in the transition plan	Within 3 months after initiation of the new program	Preschool Liaison, School-Age Liaison of School of Residence	Options: ❖ Telephone contact with parent ❖ Observation ❖ Visitation to program ❖ Telephone contact with program personnel	Preschool Liaison, New Program Staff, Parents, IEP Team, Administration of School of Residence

*IEP=Individualized Education Program

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APPENDIX T-E

Potential Differences Between ECSE and Kindergarten Programs

- Teacher-child ratio
- Skill level of children in the classroom
- Social and play expectations
- Length of class periods
- Length of activity periods (e.g., academic work periods)
- Expected level of independent performance
- Size of instructional groups
- Amount and availability of teacher attention
- Amount and availability of teacher assistance
- Type of teacher instruction
- Expectations for personal property
- Expectations during activity transitions
- Locations of areas (e.g., restrooms, playground)
- Expected tool and material skills
- Classroom rules
- Behavior management procedures
- Seating arrangements
- Number and type of children in the classroom
- Transportation
- Parent involvement

This list was compiled from the following references: Carden-Smith and Fowler (1983); Hains et al (1989); McCormick and Kawate (1982); Thompson (1979); Vincent et al (1980); Walker and Rankin (1982); Walter (1979); Walter and Vincent (1982).

Social/Survival Skills Critical for Successful Transitions

Social behaviors and classroom conduct

- Separating from parents and accepting school personnel
- Expressing emotions, affection, and feelings appropriately
- Understanding role as part of a group
- Respecting others and their property
- Playing cooperatively
- Sharing toys and materials
- Interacting without aggression
- Defending self appropriately
- Playing independently
- Imitating peer actions
- Lining up and waiting appropriately
- Sitting appropriately
- Focusing visual attention on a speaker
- Taking turns and participating appropriately in games
- Willingness to try something new
- Following classroom rules and routines
- Responding to warning words (e.g., stop, no)
- Reacting appropriately to changes in routine
- Using time between activities appropriately
- Spontaneously beginning play activities
- Playing for an appropriate length of time
- Interacting verbally with peers
- Playing with peers for an appropriate length of time

Communication behaviors

- Following two to three part directions
- Following group instructions
- Recalling and following directions for tasks previously described
- Asking peers for information or assistance
- Asking teachers for information or assistance
- Initiating and maintaining peer interactions
- Modifying behavior when given verbal feedback
- Answering questions
- Relating ideas and experience to others
- Communicating own needs and wants
- Raising a hand for teacher attention when necessary

Task -related behaviors

- Finding materials needed for a task
- Not disrupting peers during activities
- Staying in own space for an activity
- Beginning a task at an appropriate time without extra teacher attention
- Working on an activity for an appropriate time with minimal supervision
- Seeking teacher attention appropriately
- Following task directions in a small or large group
- Completing a task on time
- Replacing materials and cleaning up work space
- Following a routine in transition
- Completing a task at ability level near criteria
- Making the transition from one activity to the next with a general group verbal or contextual cue
- Complying quickly with teacher instructions
- Generalizing skills across tasks and situations
- Attending to the teacher in a large group activity
- Making choices
- Using a variety of curriculum materials
- Monitoring own behavior, knowing when a task is done

Self-help behaviors

- Locating and caring for personal belongings
- Attending to toileting needs without supervision
- Feeding self independently
- Getting on and off school bus with minimal supervision
- Avoiding obvious dangers
- Putting on and taking off outer clothing in a reasonable length of time
- Recognizing a problem exists and trying strategies to solve the problem

This list was compiled from the following references: Carden-Smith and Fowler (1983); Hains et al (1989); McCormick and Kawate (1982); Thompson (1979); Vincent et al. (1980); Walker and Rankin (1982); Walter (1979); Walter and Vincent (1982).

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APPENDIX T-G
KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM CHECKLIST
TRANSITION CONSIDERATIONS

CLASSROOM COMPOSITION

1. How many adults, teachers, aides and volunteers work in the classroom?

2. How many children are in the classroom?

3. Do the numbers of adults and children in kindergarten differ from preschool? (The adult/child ratio is the number of adults to the number of children.) The typical preschool contains 2 or 3 adults and 18 to 20 children. The typical kindergarten contains 1 or 2 adults and 20 to 30 children.

4. Are other children from the disabled child's preschool likely to attend this kindergarten?

TEACHER ATTENTION AND REINFORCEMENT

5. How frequently do teachers attend to the student with praise, instructions or reprimands? (e.g., how frequently do teachers provide praise: every minute, every few minutes, or only at the end of an activity?)

6. Do teachers provide special rewards or back-up activities for good behavior? (e.g., additional free time, access to the art center, good work certificates, positive home notes.)

7. What are the consequences for disruptive or inappropriate behavior? (e.g., temporary removal from the activity, loss of recess or free time.)

PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENT

Is the physical arrangement of the kindergarten class different from the preschool? For example, in the kindergarten:

8. Do children sit on individual mats or on a group rug?

9. Do children work at tables or at desks?

10. Are work and play areas clearly separated?

11. Are play areas visible from work areas?

12. Is the bathroom or drinking fountain adjacent to the classroom or down the hallway?

DAILY SCHEDULE

13. Is the kindergarten in session longer than the preschool?

14. How many minutes do children spend in each of these situations:

    a. in large groups (singing, sharing, listening to stories, having snacks)?

    b. in small groups?

    c. doing academic work and fine motor activities?

    d. in free play activities?

e. in recess and large motor activity?

f. in moving from one scheduled activity to another (for example, lining up for recess, waiting to be called from large group to small group)?

CLASSROOM RULES AND ROUTINES

15. Are children required to raise their hands? If so, when?

a. for permission to speak?

b. when they have finished a task?

c. to seek assistance?

16. Do children speak out? If so when? (e.g., volunteering answers in large group)

17. During what activities can children talk to their classmates and move about the room?

18. Do children have free or limited access to the bathroom, water fountain, pencil sharpener, supplies?

19. Do children manage all or some of their own materials (e.g., crayons, paper, paste) or do they use community materials? What materials do they manage?

20. Do children walk in line single-file or double-file? Do they hold hands?

ACADEMICS

21. Are there minimum competence levels? Is there a kindergarten readiness checklist?

22. What academic subjects are taught?

23. What curriculum materials most typically are used? For example, are math concepts taught through manipulative materials, such as cuisennaire rods, through worksheets, or both?

24. Are lessons taught in large or small groups?

25. How do children respond during instruction?

    a. Do children recite answers? For what subjects? (e.g., alphabet, numbers)

    b. How often and for what subjects do children reply as a group to teacher questions?

    c. How often and for what subjects do children respond individually to teacher questions?

    d. How often and for what subjects do children produce written responses?

    e. What response formats are used? (e.g., children circle the right answer, color in the right answer, mark (X) the right answer, mark (X) the wrong answer?)

26. What self-help skills do most children demonstrate?

    a. dressing independently for outdoors?

    b. shoe-tying?

    c. drinking milk through a straw?

    d. hand washing?

    e. nose care?

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

27. What support services are available to the classroom? (examples:)

    a. resource room assistance

    b. speech therapy

    c. adaptive physical education

    d. physical therapy

    e. paraeducator

28. Do parents work as classroom helpers? Do parents cooperate in home reward systems?

29. Do older students or classmates tutor children with special needs?

PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire may be complete by either an early childhood special education teacher or a kindergarten teacher with some modifications.

Teacher_____ Date_____

Classroom_____ Interviewer_____

School_____

Preliminary Questions

1. How many children are in your morning class? _____ afternoon class?_____

2. How many children with disabilities do you have in a.m.? _____ p.m.? _____

3. What types of services are available for children with disabilities in your school and how many of your students are currently receiving these services?

Services Available	# of Students		
_____	_____	1.	Speech/Language
_____	_____	2.	Physical Therapy
_____	_____	3.	Occupational Therapy
_____	_____	4.	Music
_____	_____	5.	Adaptive Physical Education
_____	_____	6.	Resource Room
_____	_____	7.	Counselor/Mental Health Therapist
_____	_____	8.	Tutor
_____	_____	9.	Other, describe:

4. How many adults are typically in your room? _____
Of those adults, how many:
_____ teachers
_____ student teachers
_____ paraeducators
_____ parents
_____ community volunteers
_____ others (describe)

5. Does your classroom have any special environmental characteristics? (e.g., open classroom, bathroom/no bathroom)

6. How long have you been teaching?

7. How long have you taught preschool?

ACADEMIC

A. **By the end of the preschool year how important is it for your children to be able to label:**

			By End of the Year		
1.	Colors				
	Which ones:	Red, Blue, Green, Yellow	1	2	3
		Orange, Purple, Brown	1	2	3
		Black, Pink, Gray, White	1	2	3
2.	Numbers-How far:	1-5	1	2	3
		1-10	1	2	3
		1-20	1	2	3
		1-___	1	2	3
3.	Alphabet:	A-Z UPPER CASE	1	2	3
		a-z lower case	1	2	3
4.	Shapes				
	Which ones:	Circle, Square, Rectangle	1	2	3
		Triangle, Diamond, Oval	1	2	3
5.	Body parts				
	Which ones:	eyes, nose	1	2	3
		hands, head, legs	1	2	3
		neck, toes	1	2	3
		heel, elbow	1	2	3
		jaw, hips	1	2	3
6.	Days of the week in correct order		1	2	3
7.	Months of year in correct order		1	2	3

B. **How important is it that the child can:**

1.	Color within lines	1	2	3
2.	Cut simple shapes with scissors	1	2	3
3.	Use paste/glue	1	2	3
4.	Read some words by sight	1	2	3
5.	Tell time on a clock	1	2	3
6.	Recognize written first name	1	2	3
7.	Recognize written last name	1	2	3
8.	Hold pencil correctly	1	2	3
9.	Write first name	1	2	3
10.	Write last name	1	2	3
11.	Write letters (upper and/or lower case) Which ones?_____	1	2	3
12.	Write numbers (how far:_____)	1	2	3
13.	Add/Subtract	1	2	3
14.	Multiply/Divide concepts	1	2	3
15.	Associate numerals with their quantities (how far:_____)	1	2	3
16.	Rote count (how far: 5 10 20 ____)	1	2	3
17.	Move from left to right, top to bottom when marking worksheets	1	2	3

C. **How important is it that the child understand concepts of:**

1.	Weather	1	2	3
2.	Size (e.g., big/little)	1	2	3

3.	Ordering (e.g., first/last)	1	2	3
4.	Spatial relations (e.g., front/back)	1	2	3
5.	Distance (e.g., miles/kilometers)	1	2	3
6.	Rhyming	1	2	3
7.	Same/different	1	2	3
8.	Sequence of events	1	2	3
9.	Time (today/tomorrow)	1	2	3
10.	Sorting by attribute (e.g., color or size)	1	2	3

D. **What other academic skills are most important for children leaving preschool and entering kindergarten?**

How long do you expect children to attend during a structured, small group activity? (i.e., seven or fewer children)

1. Beginning of School Year:
   ____ Less than 10 minutes
   ____ 10 minutes
   ____ 15 minutes
   ____ 20 minutes
   ____ More than 20 minutes
2. End of School Year:
   ____ Less than 10 minutes
   ____ 10 minutes
   ____ 15 minutes
   ____ 20 minutes
   ____ More than 20 minutes

Independent Work Skills		By End of the Year		
A.	Begins work following an instruction to the whole group	1	2	3
B.	Does not need additional teacher direction	1	2	3
C.	Attends to task without distracting self or peers	1	2	3
D.	Seeks teacher attention appropriately	1	2	3
E.	Watches or asks peers to help understand or remember directions	1	2	3
F.	Asks for information when necessary (i.e., to help understand initial instructions)	1	2	3
G.	Completes task on time	1	2	3
H.	Completes task correctly (self-corrects errors)	1	2	3
I.	Seeks assistance when needed (e.g., requests help with buttoning coat)	1	2	3
J.	Uses classroom equipment independently (e.g., pencil sharpener)	1	2	3

K. Follows routine at end of work session (waits, checks with teacher, puts materials away, goes to next activity) 1 2 3

Do children seek assistance regarding work by:

1. raising their hand? Y N
2. coming over to you with their work? Y N

What is the limit on how often to seek assistance over work time:

____ 1 time
____ 2 times
____ 3 times
____ 4 or more times (no limit)

Is it appropriate for children to seek help from peers? Y N

Is it appropriate for children to look at peer's work? Y N

Is it appropriate for children to copy from peers? Y N

What are children usually expected to do when they finish an assignment but still have time available in the period?

____ Read a book
____ Color or art activity
____ Sit quietly at table
____ Do a puzzle or another manipulative activity
____ Other:_____

Do you expect children to write their names on worksheets? Y N

When do you most often monitor and give feedback on your children's work?

____ While they are working
____ Whenever they are finished
____ At the end of the period
____ After the work period, later in the day
____ Next day

How long do you expect a child to work independently at the end of the year?

____ Less than 10 minutes
____ 10-15 minutes
____ 16-20 minutes
____ More than 20 minutes

		By End of the Year
Following Verbal Teacher Directions		
A.	Complies with simple (one-step) instructions	1 2 3
B.	Complies with two-step directions	1 2 3
C.	Complies with three-step directions	1 2 3
D.	Complies with directions to the group (e.g., everyone sit down)	1 2 3
E.	Follows directions given at a previous time (e.g., when directions are given to whole group before dispersal)	1 2 3
F.	Follows verbal teacher directions (e.g., stop, draw a line under, draw a circle around, cut)	1 2 3
G.	Responds to east, west, north, south directions	1 2 3

What types of directions do you give in class most often?

____ verbal
____ written (on chalkboard, on worksheet)
____ sample left for display (an example in area)

How quickly do you expect children to respond to your instructions/directions?

____ immediately
____ within 30 seconds
____ within 1 minute
____ within 2 minutes

How many times do you think it is reasonable to repeat instructions/directions to a child working on a familiar task?

____ no times
____ 1 time
____ 2 times
____ 3 times
____ 4 or more times

Transitions	By End of the Year
How important is it that the child:	
A. Locates personal possessions and returns them to appropriate location (e.g., puts coat in closet)	1 2 3
B. Locates materials and replaces them or puts them in order when finished (e.g., gets crayons and returns them)	1 2 3
C. Goes to various areas in the room when requested and/or directed	1 2 3
D. Anticipates activity's end without overt cue and prepares for activity changes	1 2 3
E. Makes transitions from one activity to the next with one group instruction	1 2 3

F. Stays "on-task" during transitions 1 2 3

G. Makes transition from one activity to the next using contextual cues (such as flipping the lights, piano chords) 1 2 3

H. Is able to line-up and stay in line en route to activity outside classroom 1 2 3

Are transitions between activities primarily:

____ teacher-directed
____ child-directed
____ externally cued (by bell)

Usually does one activity end before another begins? Y N

Do children move in a line from your classroom to any activity? (e.g., recess, library, music room, or gym?) Y N

What other classroom transition skills are important in your classroom?

By what time in the preschool year should a child be able to follow classroom routine with minimal assistance from teachers and peers:

____ Within first week
____ By the end of the first 3 weeks
____ By the end of the first 6 weeks
____ By the end of the first 9 weeks
____ By mid-year
____ By the end of the year

Communication Skills

			By End of the Year		
A.	Receptive language				
	1.	Comes to adults when called by name	1	2	3
	2.	Identifies soft and loud sounds	1	2	3
	3.	Discriminates between sounds in words	1	2	3
	4.	Recognizes rhyming words	1	2	3
	5.	Responds to "No," "Stop," "Don't," and other warning words	1	2	3
	6.	Recognizes when a word is said incorrectly or correctly	1	2	3
	7.	Matches beginning and ending sounds in words	1	2	3
	8.	Associates sound and written symbol for entire alphabet	1	2	3
	9.	Identifies opposite concepts	1	2	3
	10.	Responds to position words (over, under, next)	1	2	3
	11.	Understands past, present, and future tense	1	2	3
	12.	Understands singular/plural contrast for nouns	1	2	3
	13.	Understands opposite contractions (has/doesn't have; is/isn't)	1	2	3
	14.	Responds to appropriate common nouns and verbs	1	2	3
	15.	Responds to yes/no and wh- questions	1	2	3
B.	Expressive language				
	1.	Speaks intelligibly with few errors	1	2	3

2.	Communicates needs and preferences (food, drink, bathroom)	1	2	3
3.	Uses pronouns correctly (e.g., I, me, her, they, he, it)	1	2	3
4.	Uses contractions (e.g., can't)	1	2	3
5.	Uses most possessives correctly (e.g., boy's daddy; daddy's boy)	1	2	3
6.	Uses infinitives (e.g., "I like to eat cake")	1	2	3
7.	Shares experiences and ideas with others	1	2	3
8.	Uses many complex sentences	1	2	3
9.	Uses yes/no and wh- questions	1	2	3
10.	Performs simple sound blending	1	2	3
11.	Takes turns in conversation on topic provided by other person	1	2	3
12.	Speaks loudly enough but not too loud	1	2	3
13.	Has same breadth of vocabulary as peers do	1	2	3

What other communication skills are important in your classroom?

Social Interaction		By End of the Year		
A.	Initiates contact with peers	1	2	3
B.	Initiates play activities during play time	1	2	3
C.	Maintains an interaction with a peer	1	2	3
D.	Shares, exchanges materials with peers	1	2	3
E.	Leads peers in play	1	2	3
F.	Responds to peer initiations	1	2	3
G.	Imitates appropriate peer actions	1	2	3
H.	Stays with activity for an appropriate amount of time	1	2	3
I.	Waits turn to speak	1	2	3
J.	Role-plays with peers	1	2	3
K.	Uses peers' and teachers' names	1	2	3
L.	Greets adults with handshake	1	2	3
M.	Uses toys appropriately with peers	1	2	3
N.	Plays simple table games	1	2	3
O.	Uses courtesy words spontaneously (please, thank you, excuse me)	1	2	3
P.	Plays with a number of different children during the day	1	2	3
Q.	Requests permission from peers to join ongoing play activities	1	2	3
R.	Makes verbal requests of peers when seeking play materials	1	2	3

S.	Wins/loses with good sportsmanship	1	2	3
T.	Maintains eye contact when speaking	1	2	3
U.	Expresses affection, emotions, and feelings appropriately	1	2	3

What other social skills are important for children entering kindergarten?

Do you plan activities for the purpose of peer interaction? When? How often?

Self Care		By End of the Year		
A.	Takes care of own toileting needs without supervision	1	2	3
B.	Washes hands without supervision	1	2	3
C.	Dresses with minimal assistance within a reasonable amount of time	1	2	3
D.	Zips jacket or coat	1	2	3
E.	Buttons garment correctly	1	2	3
F.	Puts shoes on correct feet	1	2	3
G.	Ties or fastens shoes	1	2	3
H.	Buckles belt	1	2	3
I.	Is responsible for personal belongings	1	2	3
J.	Eats skillfully with minimal assistance	1	2	3
K.	Correctly places fork, knife, and spoon when setting table	1	2	3

L.	Pours liquid from a pitcher	1 2 3
M.	Cleans up own work space or spills	1 2 3
N.	Blows and wipes nose independently	1 2 3
O.	Gives full name when asked	1 2 3
P.	Tells street address	1 2 3
Q.	Gives home telephone number	1 2 3
R.	Knows parent(s) first and last names	1 2 3
S.	Tells birthdate	1 2 3

What other self-care skills would you like for the majority of children in your class to have at the beginning of kindergarten?

Large Group Time (eight or more children)		By End of the Year
A.	Sits appropriately	1 2 3
B.	Does not disrupt peers	1 2 3
C.	Focuses attention on speaker and shifts attention appropriately	1 2 3
D.	Answers teacher's question when individually Addressed	1 2 3
E.	Answers teacher's question when addressed as a group	1 2 3
F.	Asks appropriate questions	1 2 3
G.	Individually addresses group (e.g., sharing time)	1 2 3
H.	Participates at appropriate time (e.g., when it is his/her turn)	1 2 3

I.	Participates in group in manner that is appropriate to the task or topic	1	2	3
J.	Volunteers to teach group new song	1	2	3
K.	Participates in fingerplays, songs, stories, or games according to rules	1	2	3
L.	Knows a few songs or rhymes completely	1	2	3

What other behaviors do you expect from students during group time?

How long do you expect children to attend during a structured large group activity (i.e., with eight or more children)?

____ Less than 10 minutes
____ 10 minutes
____ 15 minutes
____ 20 minutes
____ More than 20 minutes

End of School Year:

____ Less than 10 minutes
____ 10 minutes
____ 15 minutes
____ 20 minutes
____ More than 20 minutes

		By End of the Year
Classroom Conduct		
A.	Works/plays without disturbing (i.e., talking loudly, teasing, touching) adjacent peers	1 2 3
B.	Works/plays without disturbing teacher	1 2 3
C.	Waits appropriately	1 2 3
D.	Follows most classroom rules and routines	1 2 3
E.	Complies with initial instructions	1 2 3
F.	If misbehaving, complies with second instruction	1 2 3
G.	Reacts appropriately to changes in routine	1 2 3
H.	Handles corrections appropriately	1 2 3
I.	Uses time between activities appropriately	1 2 3
J.	Does not cry excessively when disappointed	1 2 3
K.	Responds to praise or other social reinforcers	1 2 3
L.	Ignores inappropriate peer behavior	1 2 3
M.	Refrains from aggressive behavior (verbally and physically)	1 2 3

What other kinds of classroom conduct are most important for your class?

Are rules of your classroom specified to children? How?

What happens if a rule is broken?

What kind of reward systems do you use? (e.g., praise, point or token system)

1. How are they implemented?
   - ____ Verbally
   - ____ Written
   - ____ Explained to parents

2. When do you use reward systems?
   - ____ As needed
   - ____ Daily
   - ____ Beginning of year
   - ____ Other_____

Please rank order (from 1 to 9) the following categories in order of importance for your classroom, with "1" being the most important.

- ____ Academic
- ____ Classroom Conduct
- ____ Communication
- ____ Following Directions
- ____ Independent Work Skills
- ____ Large Group
- ____ Self-Care
- ____ Social Interaction
- ____ Transitions

Throughout the school year, what kinds of parent-teacher contact do you have (notes, phone calls, conferences, informal chats)? How frequently do you use each type (most of the time, as needed, daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly)?

TYPE OF COMMUNICATION	FREQUENCY
Notes	
Phone Calls	
Conferences	
Before and/or after school	
Other	

What kinds of parent-teacher contact would you prefer to have?